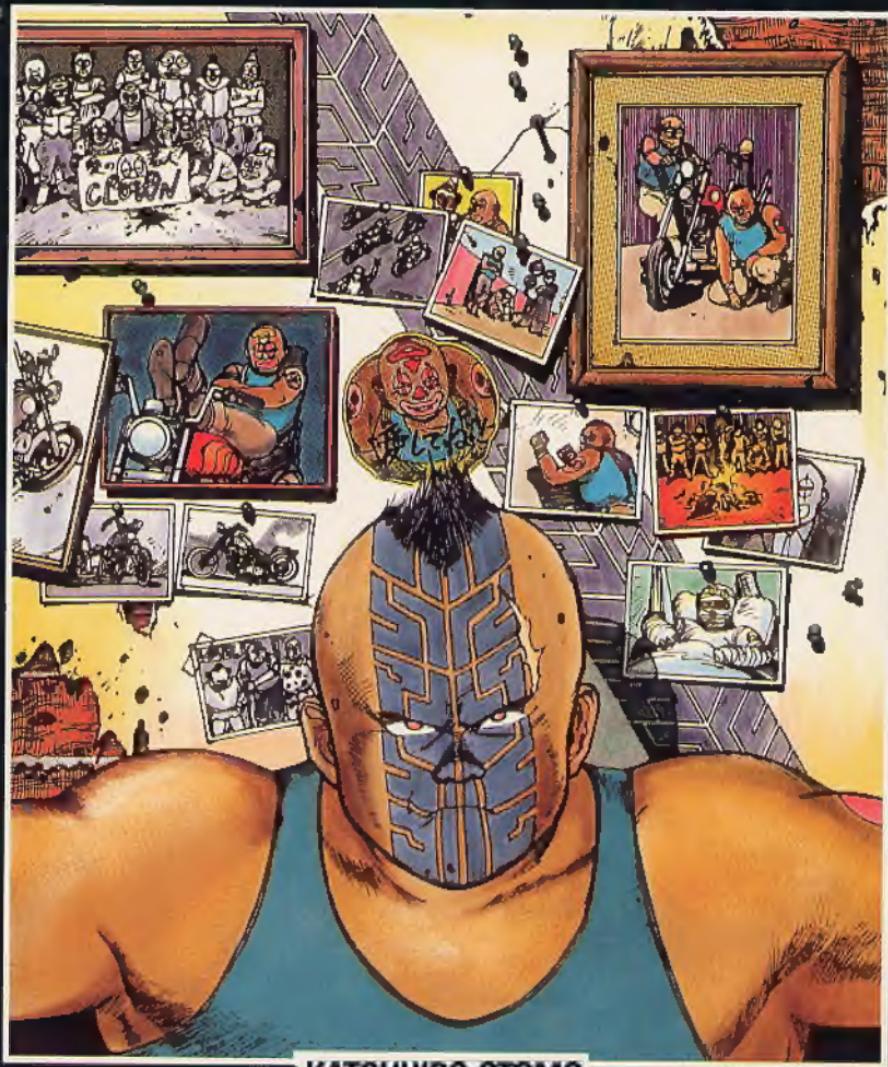


AKIRA

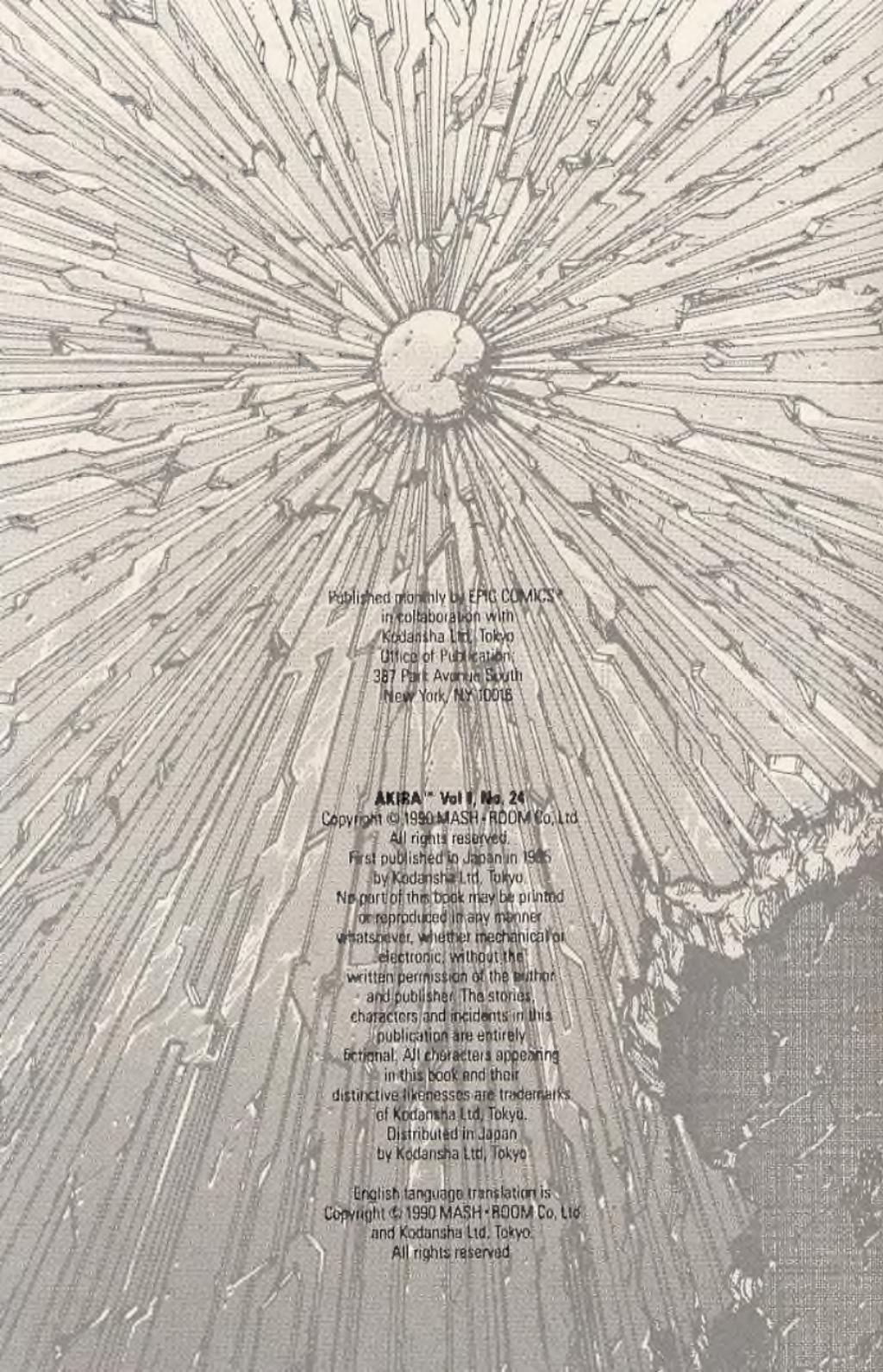
24



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KATSUHIRO OTOMO



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WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE



Twenty-thirty. The world hovers on the brink of World War IV. In a section of **Neo-Tokyo** known as the "old city"—where, thirty-eight years before, the destruction of World War III began—a band of teenaged delinquents led by **Kaneda** encounter **Number 26**—a child named **Takashi** who uses extraordinary telekinetic abilities to injure **Tetsuo**, one of Kaneda's close friends.

As a result **Kaneda** and

Tetsuo become entangled in a power struggle between a mysterious military and scientific organization led by the **Colonel** and an underground resistance group bent on putting a stop to the Colonel's activities. Members of the resistance include **Kay**, **Ryu**, and a formidable woman named **Chiyoko**. Among their superiors is the blind **Lady Miyako**—a powerful religious leader with strong precognitive gifts.

The **Colonel** has a number of psychic children under his control. **Takashi**, **Kiyoko**, and **Masaru** are identified by numbers marked on their hands. **Lady Miyako** was, at one time, **Number 19**. **Number 28** is **Akira**, so powerful that since the war he has been suspended in cryogenic sleep.

The Colonel's staff conducts experiments which awaken tremendous telepathic potential in **Tetsuo**, who is redubbed **Number 41**. **Tetsuo** is able to shrug off the most serious injuries. He goes on a killing spree, even attacking **Kaneda**. Followed by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, **Tetsuo** seeks out **Akira**, whose powers he fears may rival his own. In hibernation, **Akira**'s power responds to **Tetsuo**'s psychic energy. When **Tetsuo** reaches **Akira**'s resting place, the



Kaneda



The Colonel



Lady Miyako



Masaru



cryogenic chamber cracks from within. **Akira** emerges, dazed and docile following his long sleep.

The **Colonel** summons the powerful SOL military satellite and orders that its laser cannon be fired at **Tetsuo** and **Akira**. The two are separated by the blasts. **Akira** is saved by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, but the laser strikes Tetsuo's left arm. Afterward, **Neo-Tokyo** is placed in a state of military emergency, with "caretaker robots" patrolling the street and keeping order.

Akira and the resistance fighters are cornered by the Colonel's troops, but all seems well when **Takashi** fondly greets **Akira**. Then **Nezu**, a former resistance leader who has betrayed his own side, arrives. He tries to kill **Akira**, but kills **Takashi** instead.

The trauma of Takashi's death galvanizes **Akira**. He fully

awakens and unleashes a light blast powerful enough to devastate the entire city.

Masaru and **Kiyoko** sweep most of the people in the area upward. **Kaneda** is last seen vanishing toward the sky. Afterwards, **Lady Miyako** opens her temple and offers shelter and comfort to those in need, gathering large groups of followers in the East.

Neo-Tokyo is completely cut off from the outside world. In the western part of the city the **Great Tokyo Empire** is formed—a monarchy with **Akira** as the figurehead and **Tetsuo** as his prime minister. Together the pair use their powers, healing the sick, wielding control of the faithful, and organizing their subjects into fighting units that destroy caretaker robots and conquer military and medical relief parties sent from the outside.



Tetsuo



Kai



Tetsuo's Aide



Lt. Yamada

world. The **Empire** is eventually infiltrated by teams of spies from the outside.

Masaru and **Kiyoko** are sick with withdrawal from the drug which augments and channels mental powers, and when **Kiyoko**, whose powers are precognitive, tell **Kay** to find **Number 19, Lady Miyako** asks that **Kay** bring other psychics to her when they are well.

Tetsuo's men kill most of the spies from the outside, but their leader, **Lt. Yamada**, escapes when **Ryu** leads him into the safety of an underground shelter. **Yamada** refuses to tell **Ryu** who has sent him. He does, however, reveal that Russia has conquered part of Japan, and that the Americans' fear of **Akira** makes them reluctant to get involved.

Tetsuo forces an orgy of sex and drugs on several young girls, only one of whom—**Kaori**—survives. Afterwards, **Tetsuo** looks into **Akira**'s mind. He emerges a terrified wreck. When he recovers, he decides that **Lady Miyako** may be able to explain matters to him. Taking a dose of power-enhancing medication, **Tetsuo** teleports to the temple of the religious leader. **Lady Miyako** warns **Tetsuo** that he alone can control **Akira**'s near-inconceivable powers, but that he must first

overcome his dependency on drugs. Disgusted and perplexed, **Tetsuo** returns to his stronghold. There he neglects his duties of state, concentrating instead on trying to kick the habit.

Kay and **Chiyoko** try to move **Masaru** and **Kiyoko** to Lady Miyako's temple, but are attacked by **Tetsuo**'s followers, who escape with **Kiyoko**.

Chiyoko rescues the girl, but is badly wounded. The two are brought to safety by the **Colonel**, who has been living in isolation. **Chiyoko**, delirious, tells the **Colonel** to take **Kiyoko** to the temple, where he'll also find **Masaru**. Meanwhile, **Kay** safely conveys **Masaru** to the temple.

Ryu and **Lt. Yamada** watch the **Empire** from hiding. When **Tetsuo**'s dapper lieutenant—disgusted by **Tetsuo**'s lack of interest in the way **Lady Miyako** has thwarted their schemes—leads most of the Empire's men out as an army, **Ryu** and **Yamada** move in. They are startled by an encounter with **Tetsuo**, his power surging erratically from withdrawal. **Ryu** is even more startled when **Tetsuo** blurts out what his telepathy has shown him—that **Yamada** has come to assassinate **Akira**.

Tetsuo's lieutenant leads his



Kiyoko



Kaori



Ryu



Kay



army to Lady Miyako's temple, and they slaughter all in their path—monks, penitants and helpless refugees alike. They are, however, thwarted by the power of Lady Miyako's psychically gifted monks and defeated when **Kay** captures their leader. **Lady Miyako** refuses to permit the execution of her enemies. Tetsuo's men depart alive, bitterly swearing revenge. They return an hour later hungry for blood and victory.

Kay, along with **Kai**—one of the surviving members of Kaneda's old gang—urges **Lady Miyako** to flee before it's too late. The religious leader refuses, so the three board Lady Miyako's private elevator with **Masaru** and depart for the temple's tower to make a last stand.

The **Colonel** arrives outside the temple with **Kiyoko**. He is wounded by some of the Empire's men, but is rescued by a soldier formerly under his

command. The **Colonel** reveals his possession of a remote control laser gun that enables him to fire blasts from the SOL military satellite.

Lady Miyako's elevator reaches the tower. The doors open to reveal **Tetsuo**, sweating, delirious, and undergoing severe physical trauma from drug withdrawal.

Tetsuo's physical symptoms culminate in an explosive leap skyward that unleashes even further devastation on **Neo-Tokyo**. During the mayhem, **Kaneda** reappears, as if from nowhere.

Tetsuo hallucinates wildly, experiencing recollections of his parents and his early childhood. He is humbled by a vision of the double helix spiral that **Akira** constantly creates when he plays. Only **Kaori** is there to see **Tetsuo** return to the seat of the **Great Tokyo Empire** and bow down to his young lord.



Akira

Chiyoko

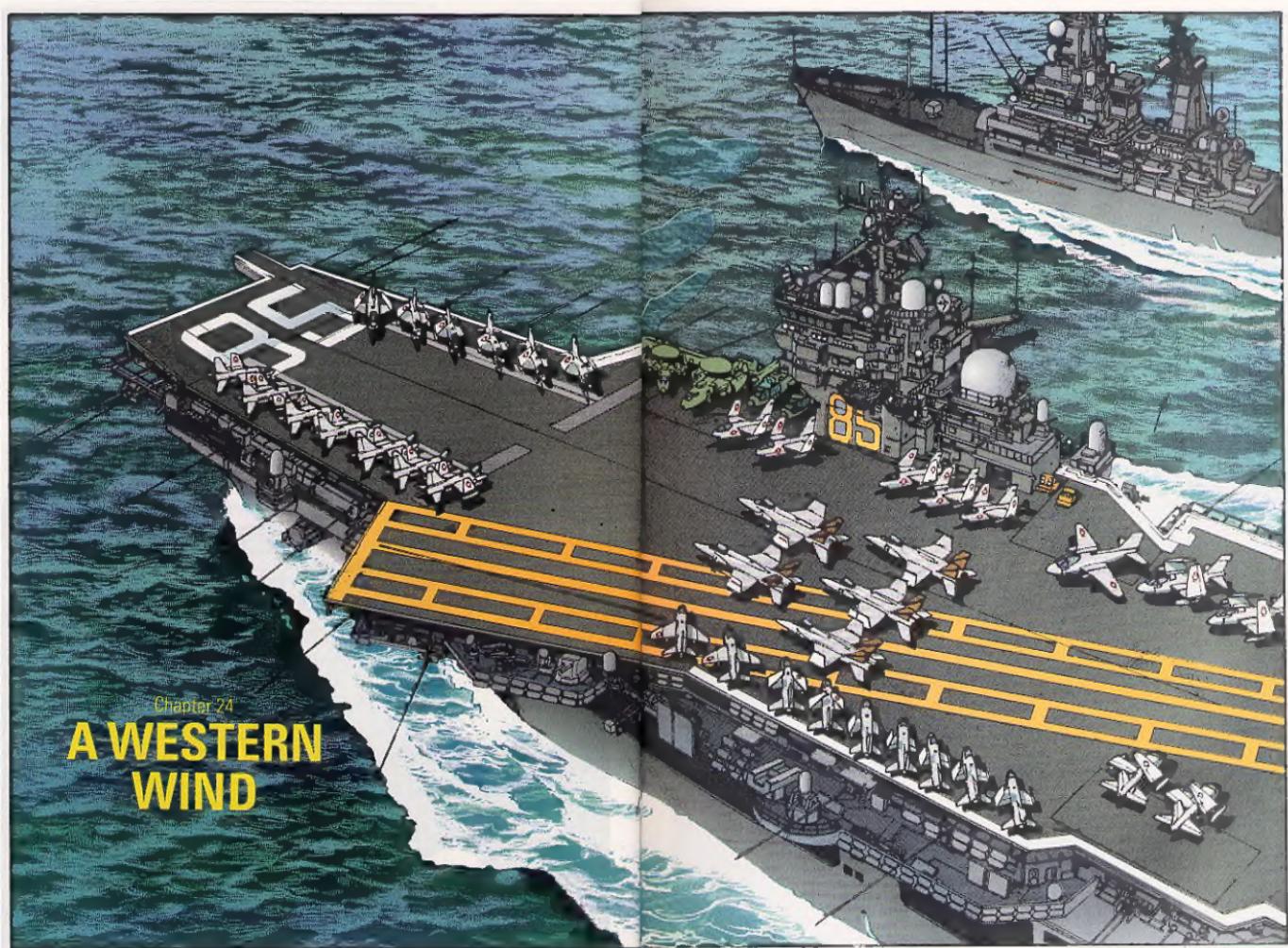
Joker

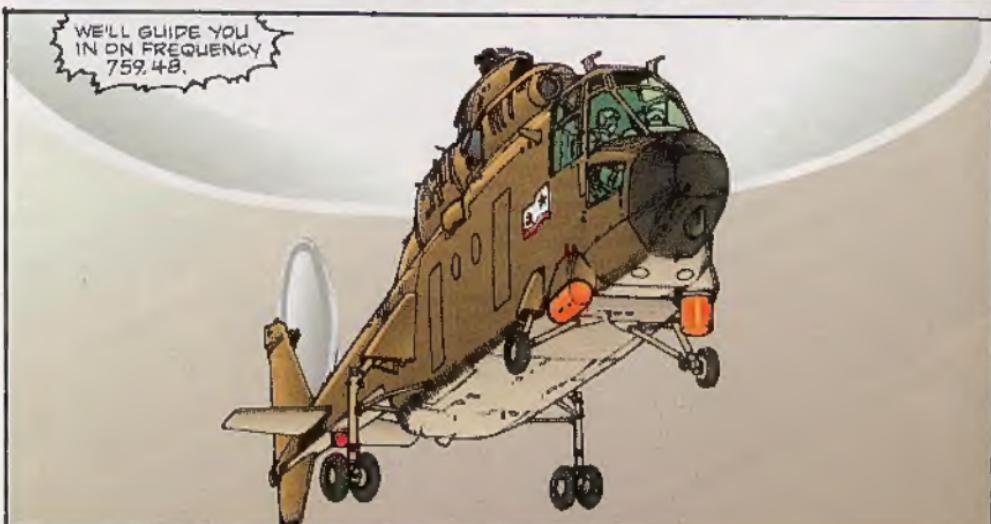
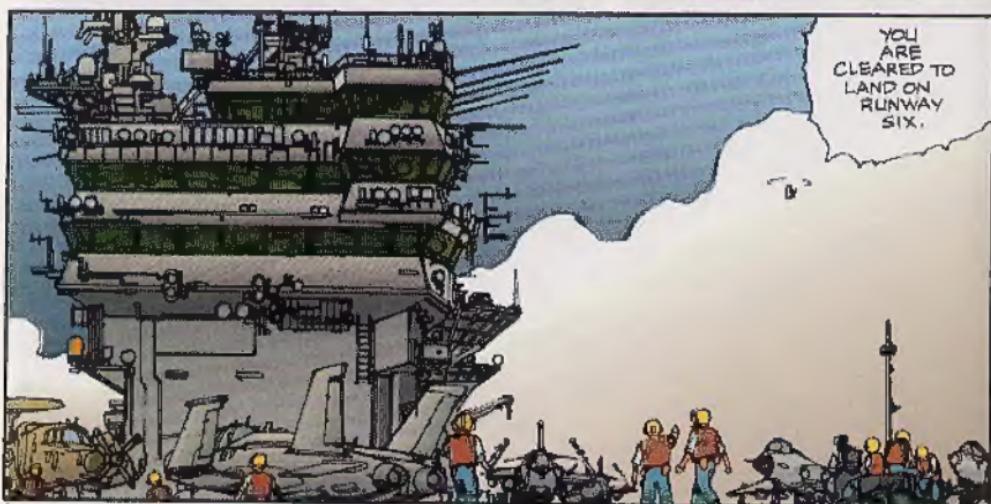
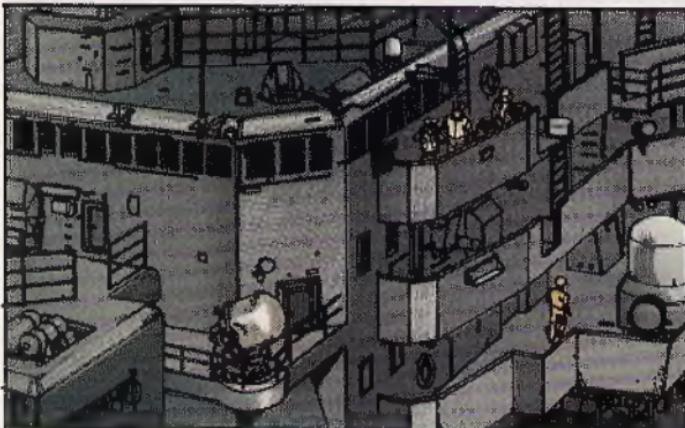
Seer

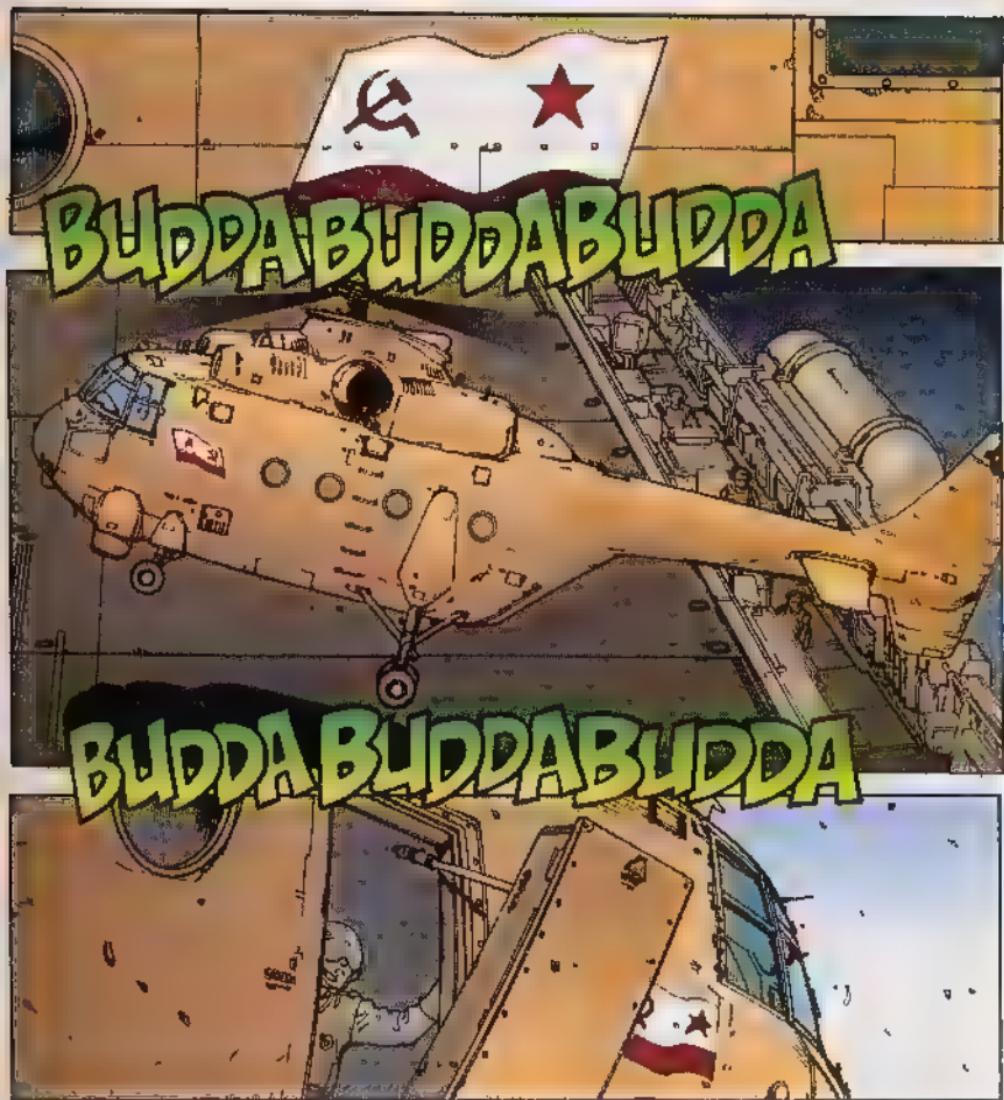


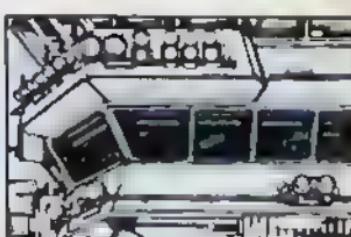
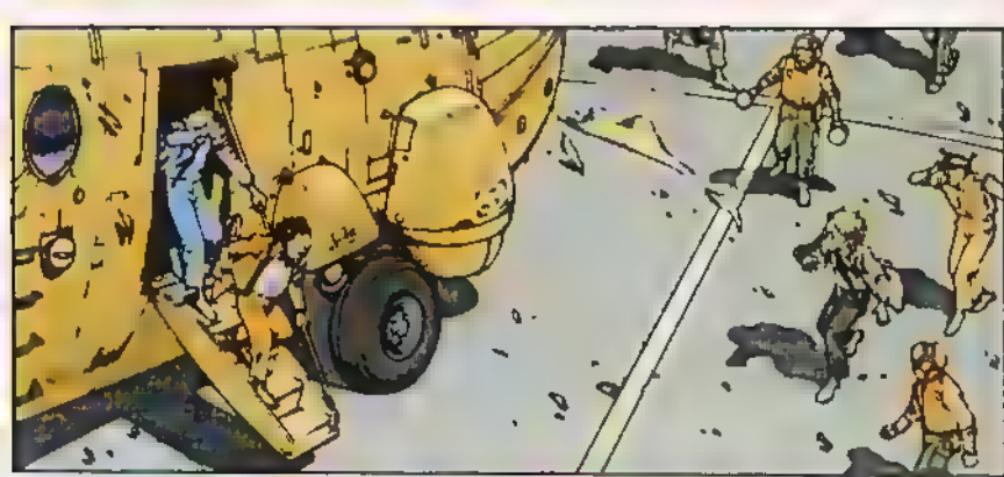
Chapter 24

A WESTERN WIND









IMPERFECT EXPLA-
TIONS WILL
ONLY
INCREASE THE MAN'S
BEWILDERMENT.

IF WE MISHANDLE
THINGS, WE RUN
THE RISK OF BEING
CASTIGATED AS
TRAITORS...OR
EVEN MADMEN.

I KNOW NOW HOW
GALILEO MUST HAVE
FELT.

YOU MAKE US SOUND GUILTY
IF ONLY WE HADN'T WASTED
SO MUCH TIME

IF THE MILITARY HAD LISTENED TO US
IN THE FIRST PLACE, THINGS WOULD
NEVER HAVE COME TO THIS PASS

I FEEL THE
SAME WAY

KEEP
OUT

THE IMPORTANT THING
IS THAT YOU'RE HERE
WHILE THERE'S STILL
TIME...

... BEFORE THE BUTTON
HAS BEEN PUSHED.

THE PRESIDENT HAS
INFORMED ME OF YOUR
DECISION TO WITHDRAW
YOUR FORCES...

...TO THE BOUNDARIES
DICTATED BY THE
ARRANGEMENTS OF
THE YEAR 2000, I
APPLAUD YOUR
WISDOM AND
YOUR COURAGE.

I APPRECIATE
THAT I'M NOT
A SOLDIER, BUT
IT'S OBVIOUS
THAT THIS WAR
HAS GROWN.

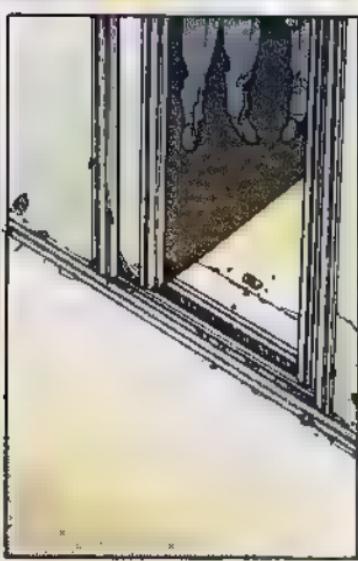
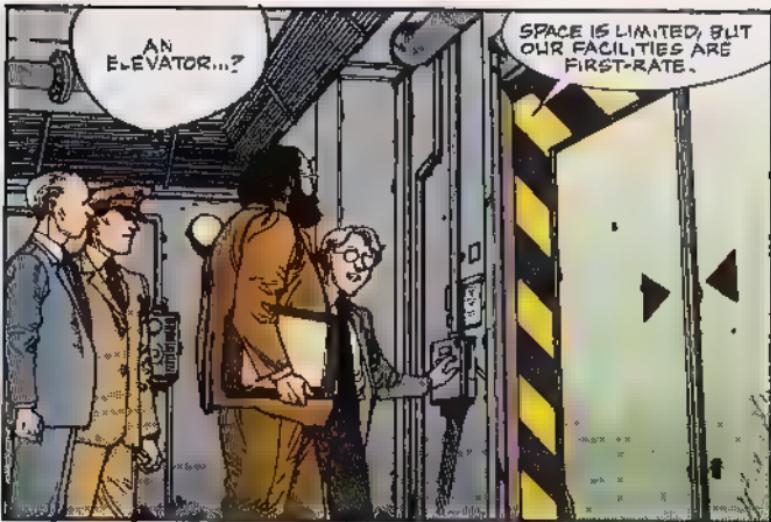
...OUT OF MISTRUST
AND MISUNDERSTANDING
ON BOTH SIDES.
SOMEONE MUST BE
WILLING TO TAKE THE
FIRST STEP.

PLEASE THANK YOUR
PRESIDENT FOR AGREEING
TO THIS JOINT SOVIET-
AMERICAN APPROACH TO
THE STUDY OF OUR
PROBLEM.

I REALIZE THE DOCTOR IS
PROBABLY TIRED FROM
HIS LONG JOURNEY,
BUT IT'LL BE TO SHOW
HIM TO THE LABORATORY
AND INTRODUCE
HIM TO OUR STAFF.

I'D
LIKE
THAT.

I HOPE YOU'LL FIND
EVERYTHING SHAPESHAPED.
LET ME KNOW IF THERE'S
ANYTHING ELSE
YOU THINK YOU'LL
NEED.



HERE WE ARE.

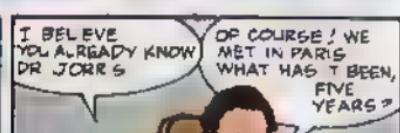
SHOOOM

:GASP!

DOCTOR!

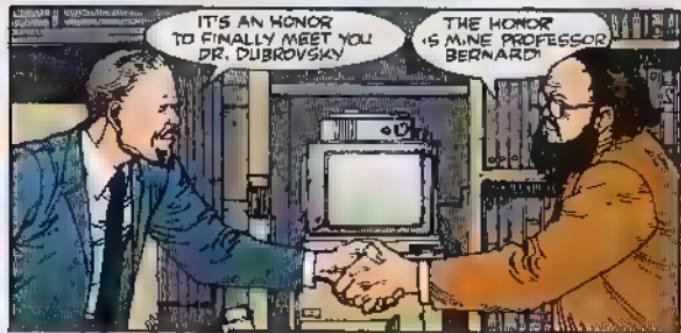
THIS WAY.

KEEP
OUT



OF COURSE! WE MET IN PARIS. WHAT HAS IT BEEN, FIVE YEARS?





SHALL
WE
BEGIN?



BEFORE WE EXAMINE THE NEW MATERIALS DR. DUBROVSKY HAS BROUGHT US, I SUGGEST WE MAKE SURE OUR OWN ANALYSIS IS COMPLETELY UP TO DATE.

A GOOD IDEA. BUT FIRST, DON'T YOU THINK THIS PROJECT SHOULD HAVE A NAME?



WHAT ABOUT SOMETHING ALONG THE LINES OF YOUNG A...

... OR JUVENILE A... AND THE LETTER A, OF COURSE, WOULD STAND FOR...



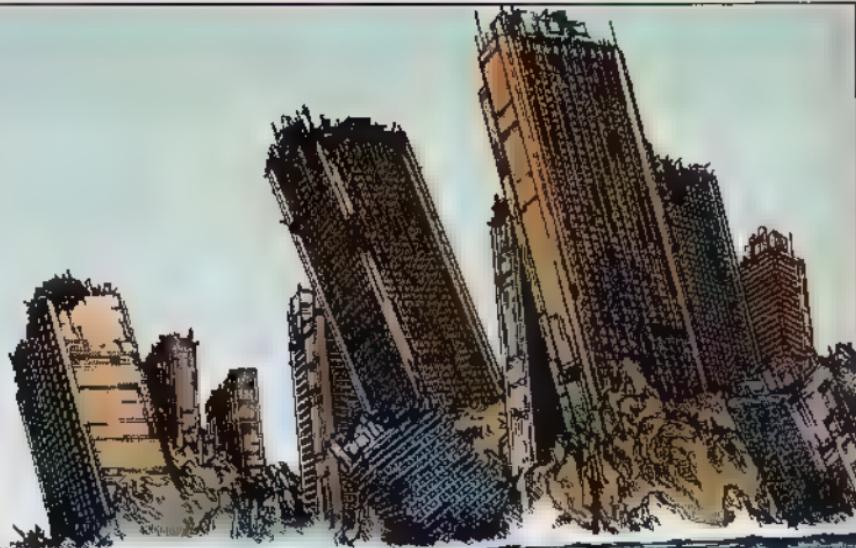
AKIRA!

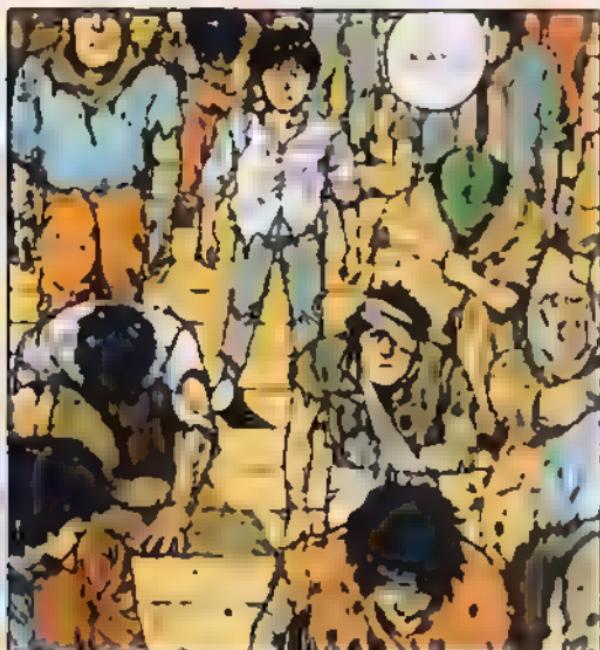
VERY GOOD!

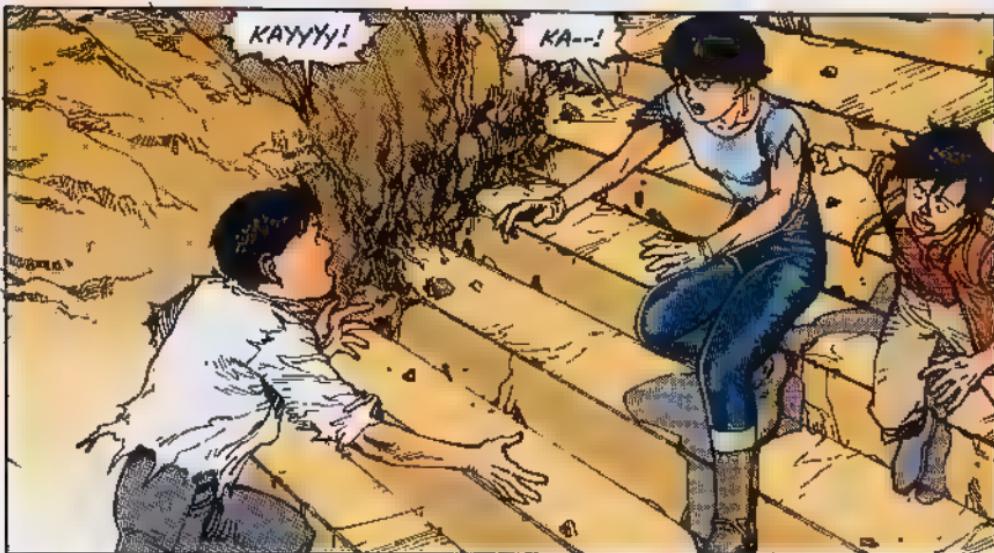
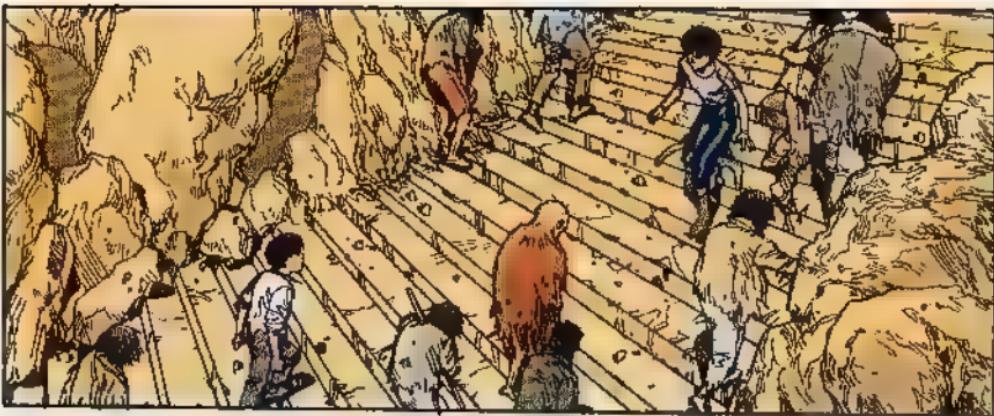


JUVENILE A, DID
YOU SAY? I
LIKE IT.

THEN IT'S SETTLED!







KANEDAAA!



HUH?



HEY! WAIT A
MINUTE YOU--!

IT'S REALLY
YOU! YOU'RE
ALIVE!

YOU
ASS-
HOLE!



I'VE BEEN SO
WORRIED ABOUT
YOU! -SOB-SOB!





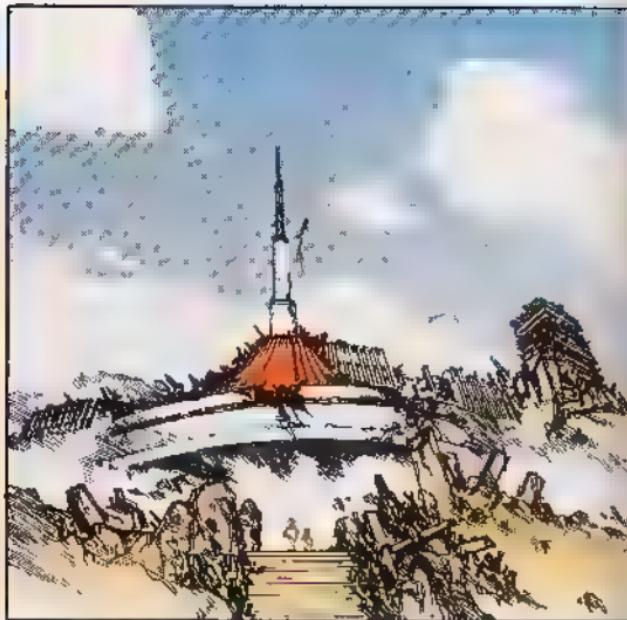




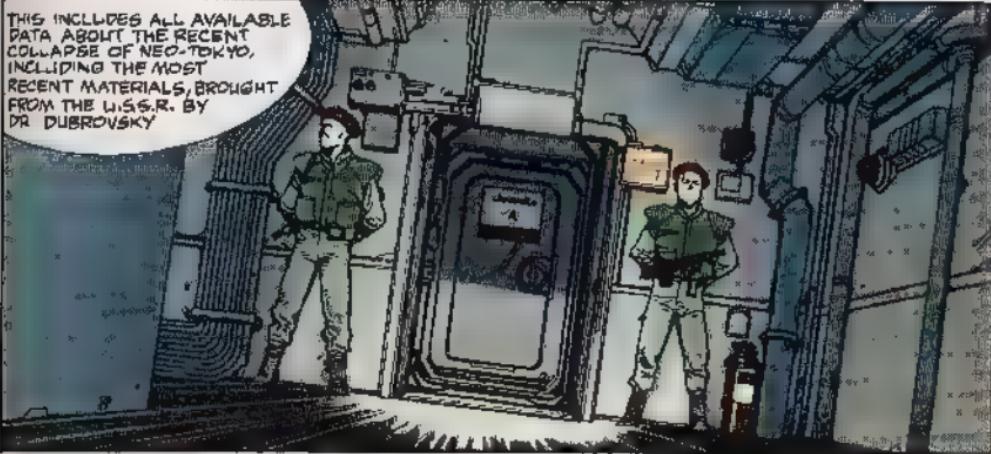








THIS INCLUDES ALL AVAILABLE DATA ABOUT THE RECENT COLLAPSE OF NEO-TOKYO, INCLUDING THE MOST RECENT MATERIALS, BROUGHT FROM THE U.S.S.R. BY DR DUBROVSKY



KEEP IN MIND THAT THE NUMBERS MARKED IN BLUE ARE ASSUMPTION.

Jovanna

A

THE NUMBERS HERE ARE FROM THE THIRD AKIRA PHENOMENON, WHICH OCCURRED SEVERAL DAYS AGO IN NEO-TOKYO.

RESTRICTED AREA
KEEP OUT
ID MUST BE WORN

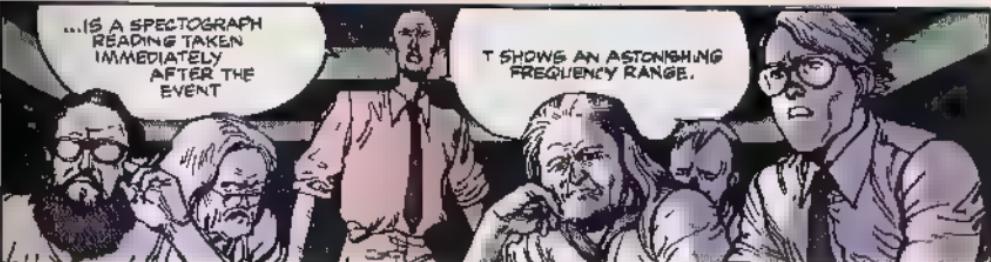
I RENDERED IT IN THREE DIMENSIONS TO FACILITATE COMPREHENSION. PLEASE DIRECT YOUR ATTENTION...

...TO THIS GRAPH SHOWING THE QUANTITY OF ENERGY GENERATED OVER A SCALE MAP OF THE CITY.

AND THIS...

...IS A SPECTROGRAPH READING TAKEN IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE EVENT

IT SHOWS AN ASTONISHING FREQUENCY RANGE.



THERE WERE GAMMA RAYS AT THE HEART OF THE DISTURBANCE, AS WELL AS EVIDENCE OF A RED SHIFT...

...WHICH IS CORROBORATED BY READINGS FROM OTHER SURVEY INSTALLATIONS VERIFIED AGAINST A TIME-PROCESS DIAGRAM.

WE ALSO HAVE CONFIRMATION OF RADIATIVE DISINTEGRATION, NUCLEAR FUSION, GRAVITY WAVE DETECTION, PROTON COLLAPSE... IN SHORT...

...ALL EVIDENCE INDICATES THE OCCURRENCE.

THAT IS UNQUESTIONABLY WHAT OCCURRED. WE'VE CONFIRMED THE PRESENCE OF UNKNOWN SUBSTANCES AND PHENOMENA AT THE SITE.

...OF A MINIATURE BIG BANG.

T WILL TAKE US SOME TIME JUST TO COMPLETE ANALYSIS OF THE DATA.

SO... WE'RE WITNESSES TO THE BIRTH OF A NEW UNIVERSE.

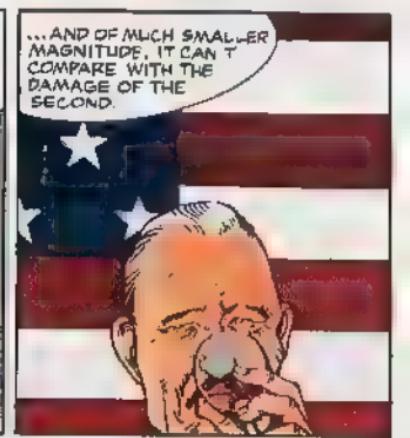


WE HAVE TO TREAT THE
SECOND AND THIRD
PHENOMENA AS SEPARATE
EVENTS. THE SECOND
IS VERY PAINFUL TO
CONSIDER...



...BUT THERE ARE
DISTINCT DIFFERENCES
BETWEEN THE TWO.

WHEREAS THE SECOND
EVENT GENERATED MASSIVE
READINGS IN ALL THREE
DIMENSIONS, THE THIRD
WAS TWO-DIMENSIONAL...



...AND OF MUCH SMALLER
MAGNITUDE, IT CAN T
COMPARE WITH THE
DAMAGE OF THE
SECOND.

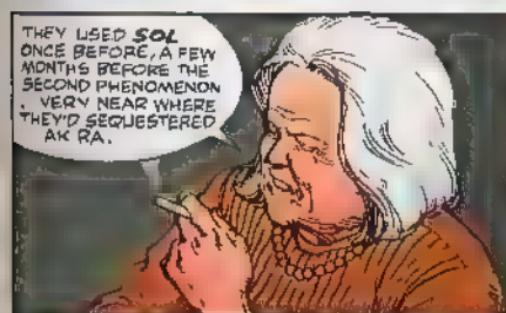


IT'S INTERESTING THAT
THE THIRD EVENT OC-
CURRED IN THE CENTER OF
THE SPOT AT WHICH **SOL**
MILITARY SATELLITE
SPONTANEOUSLY FROD
SHORTLY THERE.
AFTER



THE FIRST EVENT
WAS IN 1997, LONG
BEFORE **SOL** WAS
BUILT...

WELL,
BUT



THEY USED **SOL**
ONCE BEFORE, A FEW
MONTHS BEFORE THE
SECOND PHENOMENON
VERY NEAR WHERE
THEY'D SEQUESTERED
AK RA.

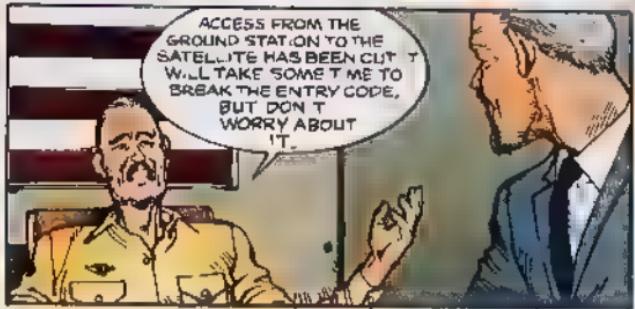
WE CAN T
ASSUME A CAUSAL
RELATIONSHIP,
ALTHOUGH THERE
MIGHT BE A
CONNECTION



I AGREE THERE WAS A LAPSE OF SEVERAL MINUTES BETWEEN THE F RING AND THE OCCURRENCE OF THE THIRD PHENOMENON



BY THE WAY, ADMIRAL WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF SOL?



ACCESS FROM THE GROUND STATION TO THE SATELLITE HAS BEEN CUT. IT WILL TAKE SOME TIME TO BREAK THE ENTRY CODE, BUT DON T WORRY ABOUT IT.



I THINK WE'RE IN GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT THE SOURCE OF THE THIRD PHENOMENON WASN'T AKIRA



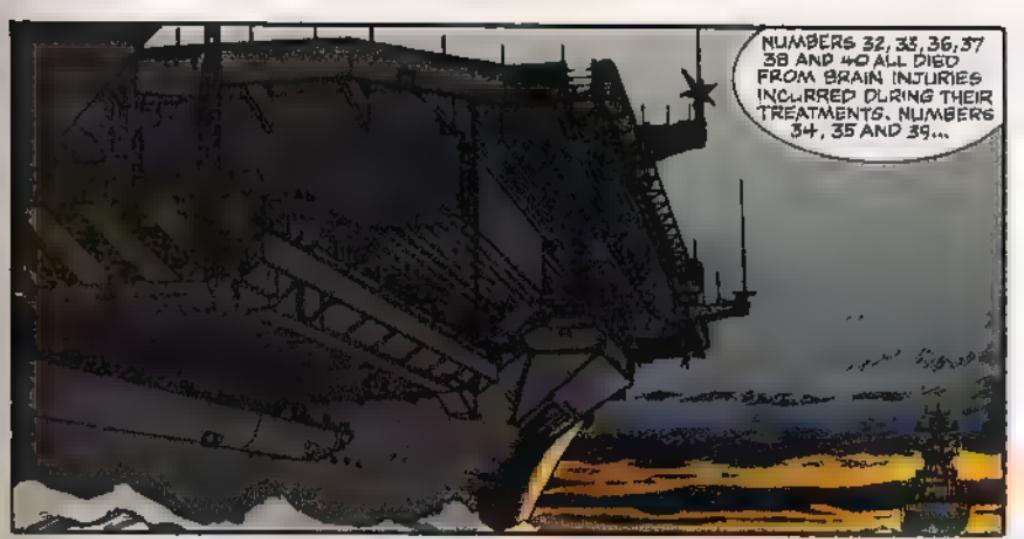
JORDIS ARE YOU SUGGESTING ANOTHER SOURCE?



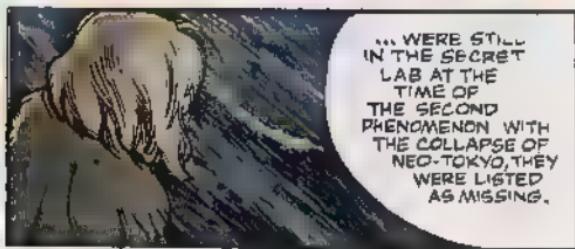
BUT ALL INDICATIONS WERE THAT THE REST OF THE CHILDREN IN THE TWENTIES WERE HARMLESS

RECORDS INDICATE THE NUMBERS WERE REGISTERED ALL THE WAY UP TO 41...

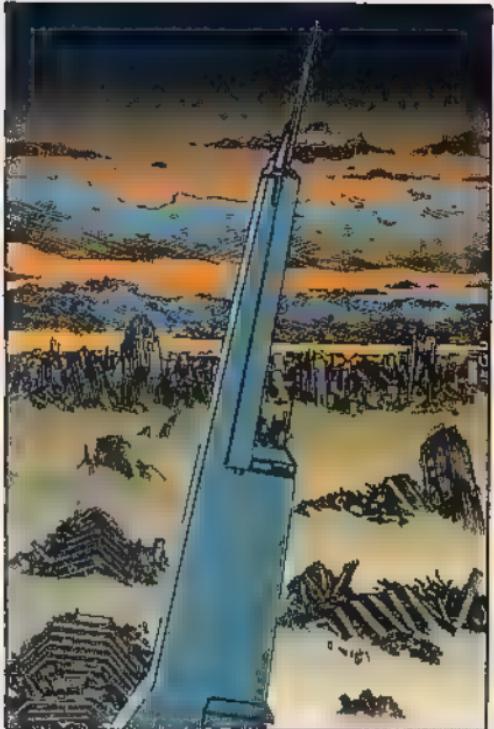




NUMBERS 32, 35, 36, 37
38 AND 40 ALL DIED
FROM BRAIN INJURIES
INCURRED DURING THEIR
TREATMENTS. NUMBERS
34, 35 AND 39...



THE SAME DAY
SOL LASER CANNON
WAS FIRED AT THE
COMPLEX WHERE
AKIRA
WAS BEING
HELD.





I'M AFRAID.

PLEASE
REST
HERE.



IT WILL BE SEVERAL
DAYS BEFORE YOUR
WOUND IS CLOSED.
UNTIL THEN,
YOU MUSTN'T
TAX YOUR
SELF.



DID YOU HEAR WHAT
HE SAID? IT MEANS
I'M STUCK HERE
FOR SEVERAL
DAYS.



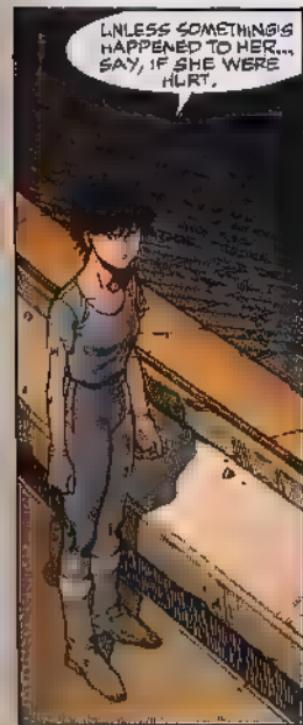
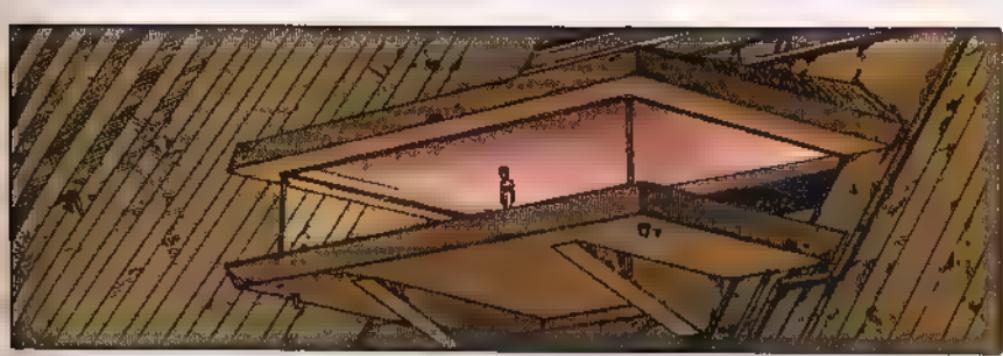
WHAT MATTERS IS
CHIYOKO'S ALIVE
AND YOU REFUSE
TO TELL ME WHERE
YOU'VE SEEN
HER



THAT'S RIGHT.

THEN YOU'RE IN
FOR A LO-OO-ONG
FIGHT





I'M
RIGHT,
AREN'T
I?



YOU ARE THE
ONE WHO FRED
THE SPACE
LASER.



AND I'M NOT
THAT INTERESTED
EITHER.



YOU'RE CALLED
KAY, AREN'T
YOU?

THAT'S RIGHT
COLONEL.

WHAT KEEPS YOU IN
NEO-TOKYO?

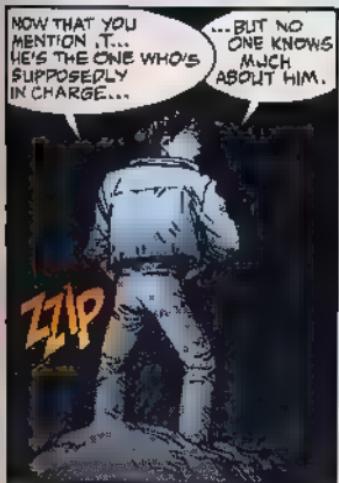
IN MY
CASE...

...IT'S DEDICATION
TO DUTY I HAVE A JOB
TO FINISH

LOYALTY TO FRIENDS...
ONE OF WHOM MIGHT
BE DYING.

AND I NEED SOL
TO DO IT!





NOW THAT YOU'RE
BACK, WE CAN
SETTLE THAT
SCORE.

AH...BY
THE
WAY.

YOU WOULDN'T
HAVE ANY
CLOTHES I
COULD BORROW,
WOULD YOU?

THAT'S
RIGHT, I
FORGOT!

I STILL HAVEN T
INTRODUCED YOU
TO THE REST OF
THE GANG

WHAT
GANG?

YOU EXPECT ME TO
MAKE A GOOD FIRST
IMPRESSION DRESSED
LIKE THIS?

COME ON... YOU
CAN GET ANYTHING
YOU WANT

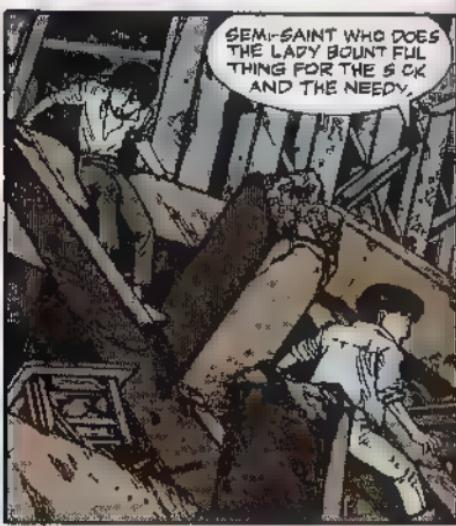
THERE'S SOMEONE
YOU'VE GOTTA MEET

WHO IS HE?

YOU... SEE

OW





NOT EVERYONE COMES
EMPTY-HANDED. PEOPLE
BRING FOOD, MEDICINE...
SOME OF 'EM GO INTO
BUSINESS.

PEOPLE WANTING TO
TRADE NEED VALUABLES...
LOT OF 'EM BECOME
SCAVENGERS...



THERE'S ENOUGH WORTH
RIPPING OFF, WE'VE EVEN
GOT BANDS OF THIEVES
...A WHOLE BLACK
MARKET COMMUNITY,
BUILT AROUND THE
SHRINE.

OH, I GET IT!

THAT'S WHERE I
CAN BUY SOME
CLOTHES



ONLY... I DON'T
HAVE ANYTHING
WORTH BARTERING.



BE REAL. WHERE RE
WE GONNA FIND AN
OPEN STORE THIS
TIME OF NIGHT?

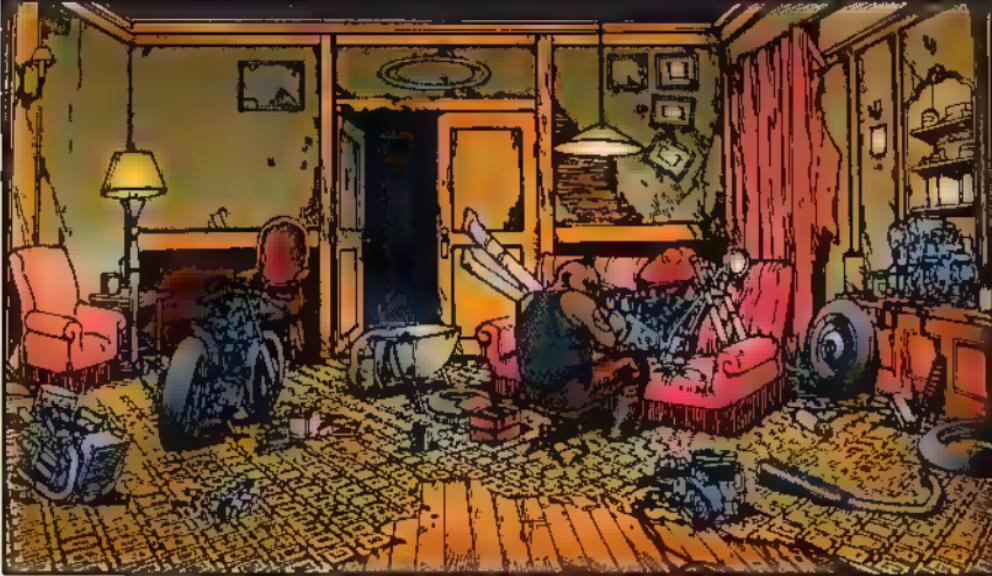
YOU MEAN...

WE'RE GOING
TO THE THIEVES'
QUARTER?





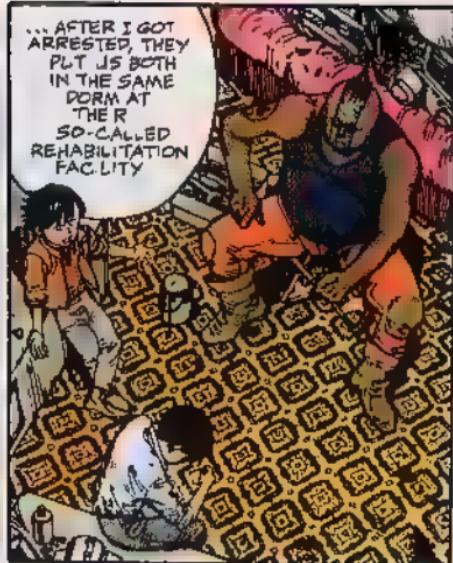




AAH-CHOO!

...AFTER I GOT ARRESTED, THEY PUT JS BOTH IN THE SAME DORM AT THE R SO-CALLED REHABILITATION FACILITY

WHEN THE CITY COLLAPSED, A WALL FELL IN ON ME. I'D HAVE DIED THERE...





FOR WHAT HE DID TO
MY FRIENDS... AND
FOR MYSELF!



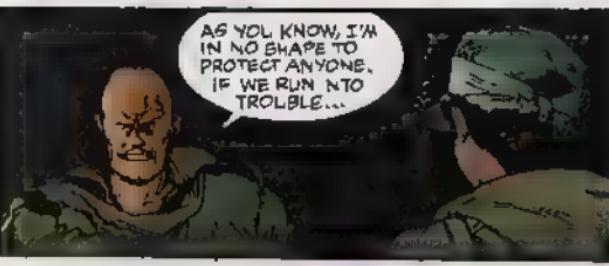




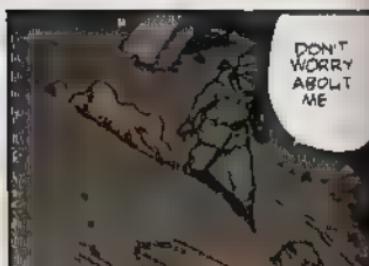
WELL... LET'S
BE OFF.



COLONEL.



AS YOU KNOW, I'M
IN NO SHAPE TO
PROTECT ANYONE.
IF WE RUN INTO
TROUBLE...



DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT
ME



...YOU'LL HAVE
TO TAKE CARE
OF YOURSELF.



ROCKET GUNS
AND TRENCH
MORTARS... THAT
MEANS A FULL-SCALE
WAR.

NO... NO... IT JUST
WANT ME

IT WAS THE EMPIRE
BROUGHT OUT
EVERY WEAPON IN
THEIR ARMORY

MASS
THIS ONE...

HOW DOES
TETSUO GET
INTO ALL
THIS?

YOU SAID
HE HAD NO
CONNECTION
WITH THAT
ARMY?

LAST I HEARD, HE'D
BEEN DOING A LOT OF
DRUGS. WHEN I SAW
HIM, HE WAS TOTALLY
STRUNG OUT.

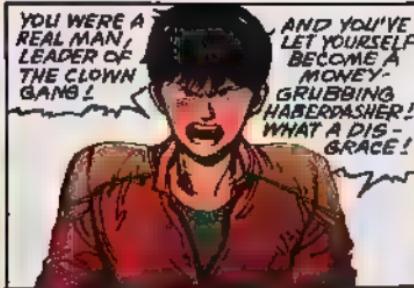
SOUNDS LIKE HE'S
FORGOTTEN THAT
A HEAD BELONGS
ON TOP OF A
BODY.

HUH?

ZIP

CHECK IT OUT!
THIS JUMPSUIT
FITS LIKE IT
WAS MADE
FOR ME!

I'LL TAKE IT!



AND YOU'VE LET YOURSELF BECOME A MONEY-GRUBBING HABERDASHER! WHAT A DIS-GRACE!



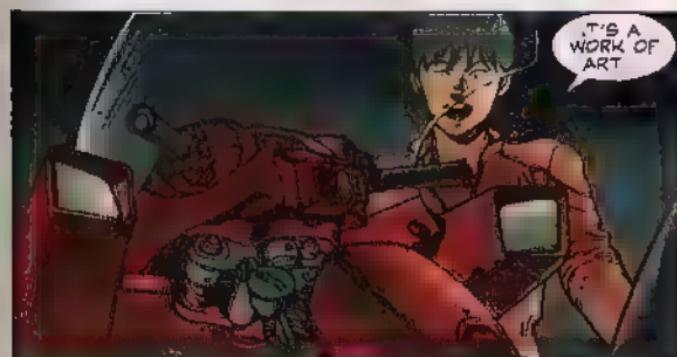
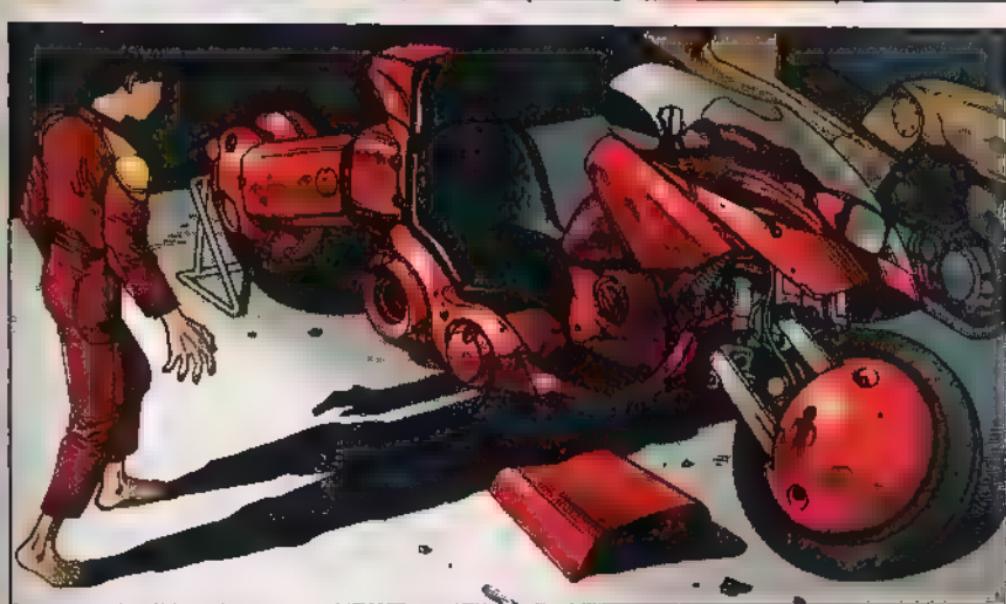
... KANEDA.

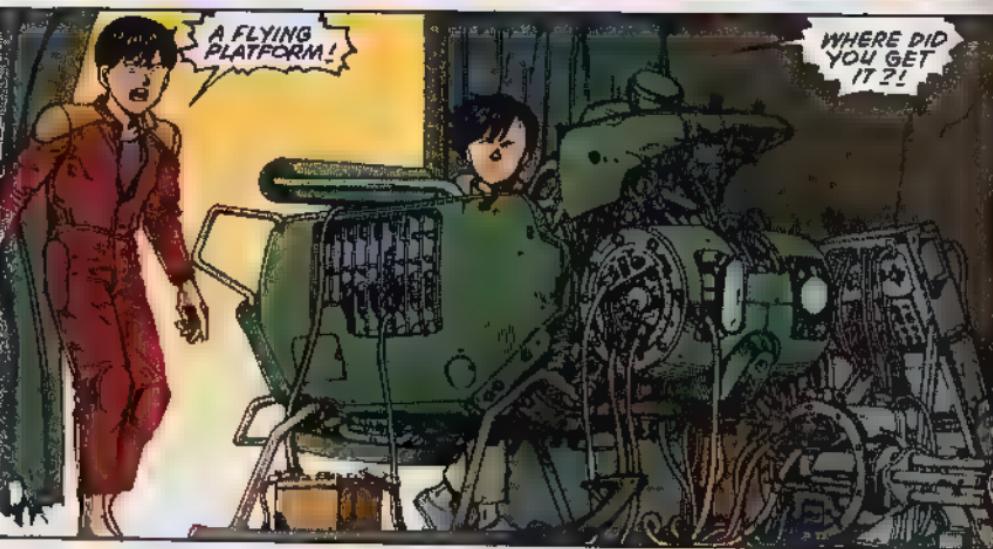


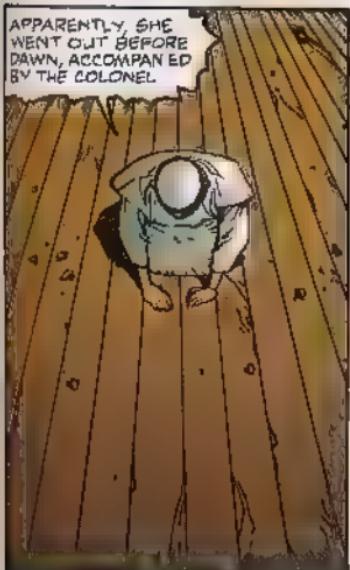
IF YOU HAD ANY HONOR LEFT, YOU'D GIVE ME THE ENTIRE OUTFIT!



IGN'T IT GREAT?







WHAT
DO
YOU
MEAN--

--MIYAKO
WANTS
ME?!

HER MEN ARE
LOOKING ALL
OVER THE
PLACE.

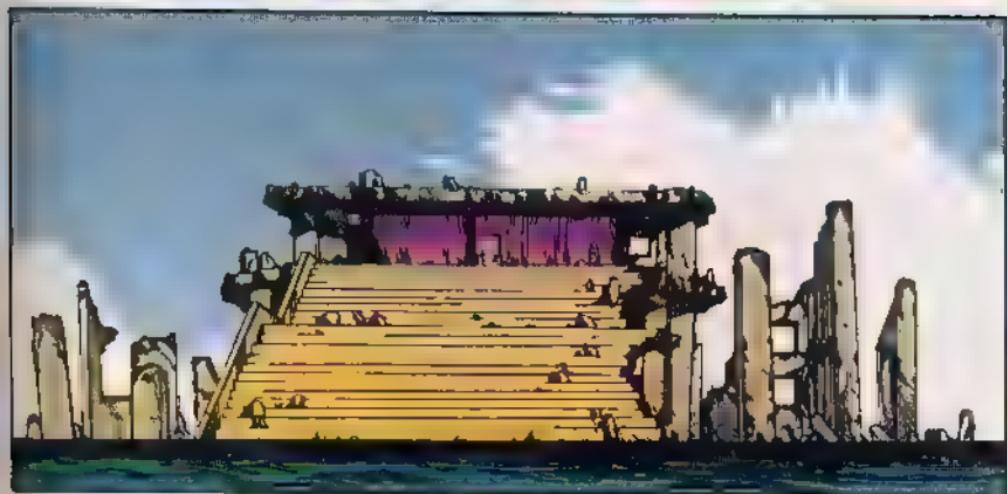
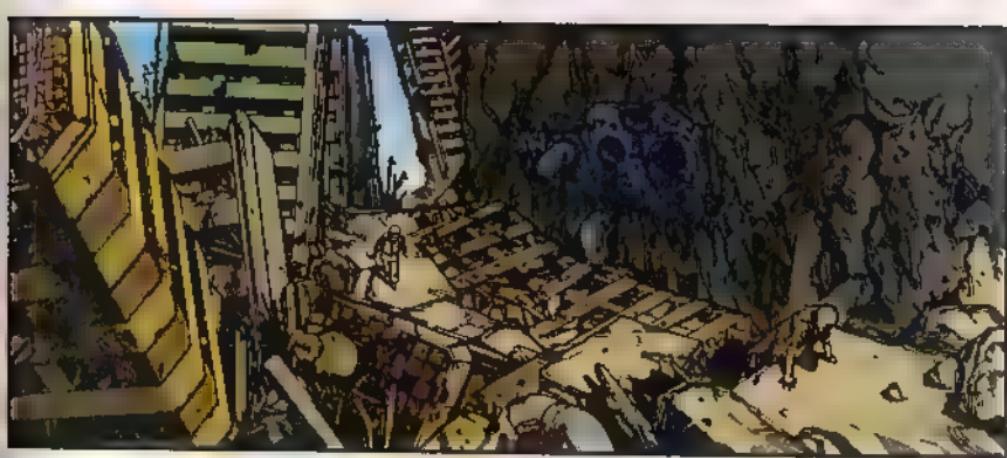
HOW COME?

I DON'T KNOW
IT'S GOT
SOMETHING TO
DO WITH A GRL
NAMED KAY
WHO TOOK OFF
OR DIS-
APPEARED.

...KAY... ?

WHAT'S WRONG ? NOTHING





MASTER TETSUOO!





NEXT ISSUE: VISION UNDERGROUND

AKIRA: the movie AN UPDATE

The English-language version of the animated film **AKIRA** will play in the following cities during the months of September and October:

BROOKLINE, MA (BOSTON AREA)

COOLIDGE CORNER THEATER

September 3—open ended

KEENE, NH

PUTNAM SCREENING ROOM

September 7—September 9

BALTIMORE, MD

BALTIMORE FILM FORUM, BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

September 13—14

WICHITA, KS

MALL THEATER

September 15 only

WATERVILLE, ME

RAILROAD SQUARE CINEMA

September 14—20

NORTHHAMPTON, MA

PLEASANT STREET THEATER

September 19—25

MONTGOMERY, AL

CAPRI THEATER

September 21—27

ANN ARBOR, MI.

MICHIGAN THEATER

September 28—30

INDIANAPOLIS, IN

IRVING THEATER

September 28—October 4

LONDON, ENGLAND

SCALA CINEMA

September 22 only

NEW YORK, NY

THE NEW YORK FILM FORUM

October 19—November 1

Also in October, **AKIRA** is opening in Toronto at the Paradise Theater and in Ottawa at the Bytowne Theater.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO

writer/illustrator

YASUMITSU SUETAKE
chief assistant to Mr. Otomo

MAKOTO SHIOSAKI
SATOSHI TAKABATAKE
assistants to Mr. Otomo

HIROSHI HIRATA
designer • AKIRA calligraphy

AKIRA SAITO
designer • Kodansha edition

Kodansha Ltd.

YOKO UMEZAWA
translation

KOICHI YURI
HISATAKA NISHITANI
editor • Kodansha edition

YUKA ANDO
editorial coordinator • Tokyo

NORIYUKI TOKAZAKI
managing editor • New York

Eric Comics

JO DUFFY

english adaptation

STEVE OLIFF

with the

OLYOPTICS COMPUTER CREW
colorists

MICHAEL HIGGINS
letterer

STEVE ALEXANDROV
production

MARIE JAVINS
assistant editor

MARGARET CLARK
editor

CARL POTT
executive editor

The Thieve's Quarter of Neo-Tokyo becomes the backdrop for Kaneda to forge new unions with old friends...and old enemies. The cold light of an early dawn sets the stage for an uneasy alliance between Kay and the Colonel. And the mighty war machines of the superpowers are the setting for a meeting of the world's most brilliant minds, men and women united in a desperate effort to understand the mystery and power of Akira...while a world still remains in which to understand anything at all.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

AKIRA

